

**Private infinity pools, 'beyond organic' toiletries... and Thalasso jet showers that help you slim: Welcome to a new generation of ultra-spa in Cyprus**

- **Anassa is a family-owned resort famed for its beautiful food and beach**
- **Located on an isolated stretch of coastline 45 minutes drive from Paphos**
- **Spa offers a range of treatments including massage with Cypriot rose oil**

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By Nicole Mowbray for Mail Online

The last few years have not been kind to fans of the spa.

Eager to capitalise on what has undoubtedly been an explosion in popularity of the 'pampering break', every hotel worth its (bath) salt has opened its very own 'wellness centre'.

No matter if the only space available for some of these so-called 'spa' facilities is in the old broom cupboard. Put a few candles in there, an iPod with some chanting music on it, dim the lights and no-one will notice they're paying £120 for a 60 minute massage in the tarted up area that Janet used to store her mop, pail and bucket of industrial strength bleach.



© Alamy  
The Anassa hotel offers guests yoga, meditation, watersports or taking a yacht to the nearby Blue Lagoon

The thing is, hoteliers, we do notice. Spa goers are more savvy than you think. You wouldn't expect to be able to fob off people on a golfing holiday with a lousy 9-hole pitch and putt and likewise, true spa junkies know that one treatment room does not a spa make.

I have unashamedly high standards when it comes to pampering, who better, then, to test out some of the new spa treatments on offer from Cypriot ultra spa 'Anassa'?

This place is what's known in the business as a 'destination spa'. In other words, treatments aren't only an 'add on', they're their whole reason for being.

Located on an isolated stretch of coastline about 45 minutes drive from the bustling Paphos in the Akamas Peninsula, Anassa is a family-owned resort famed for its beautiful food and beach. There are delightful villas that wind out across the property in a kind-of mock Greek village replete with cobblestone streets and tumbling bougainvillea. It is utterly delightful.



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But what about their all-important spa?

Day one, I trundle past a beautiful rustic Greek chapel in the hotel's grounds, down to the spa for an 8am yoga treatment. It's raining - a rarity in Cyprus in the springtime - and so instead of performing our morning stretches on a balcony overlooking the Mediterranean, we take to a room overlooking some tall fir trees with our teacher Simon.

Despite the downpour, it's a good start. While the hotel has a fully equipped gym, there are also all manner of extras you can book - yoga, meditation, watersports or chartering a yacht out to the Blue Lagoon about an hour's sail along the coast.



On an isolated stretch of coastline, Anassa is a family-owned resort famed for its beautiful food and beach



Villas wind out across the property replete with cobblestone streets and tumbling bougainvillea

And then there's the treatments.

As well as traditional thalassotherapy and Organic Pharmacy products, the spa at the Anassa has just taken on Ila products, which is music to my ears.

I've long been a devotee of the Ila brand. Created by hand in England, Ila goes to great lengths to be ethical. They describe themselves as 'beyond organic' an ethos that has been very close to founder Denise Leicester's heart since she began the company in 2005. Ila at Anassa is the kind-of pampering marriage that I knew would blow my socks off if it had been done right. But had it?

I began my Ila journey with a 60 minute Ku Nye massage, a treatment that's described as a 'grounding' combination of massage coupled with cupping, kneading, acupressure and the use of hot stones and poultices.

I'm not normally a fan of therapies that have little or nothing to do with the place you're visiting (otherwise you feel like you could be having the treatment anywhere) so I was pleased to hear that the divine smelling oil used in this exotic-inspired healing session actually comes from Cypriot roses.



The blissfully peaceful resort is a 45 minutes drive from the bustling Paphos in the Akamas Peninsula

If you're not a fan of the heat, do try the Prana Vitality massage which doesn't use hot poultices, just long deep sweeping strokes to eliminate stress from the muscles.

There are few things spa junkies loathe more than spending their hard-earned euros on a perfunctory treatment administered in a squashed room by a therapist who has only just passed her Level I Beauty NVQ. This is not a worry at Anassa. Despite the Ku Nye being a brand new offering at the spa, my therapist was experienced, and instinctive - unsurprising when you learn that Denise picks all her therapists by hand and gives them extensive one-to-one training.

I defy even the most battle-hardened insomniac to stay awake after this treatment. It was all I could do to drag myself back to my room and clamber into my marshmallow-esque bed.



Therapists at the spa are handpicked and given extensive one-to-one training

### **TRAVEL FACTS**

Classic Collection Holidays (0800 294 9318) offers 7 nights at [Anassa](#), Cyprus from £1699 per person this September. Price based on 2 adults sharing a garden view room on a bed & breakfast basis and includes return flights from London Gatwick (other UK departure airports available) and private transfers. Visit [www.classic-collection.co.uk](http://www.classic-collection.co.uk) or your local travel agent.

Next up; a bespoke Ila facial with renowned celebrity facialist Anastasia Achilleos. Facials are one of those things that you can feel quite cheated by. If you visit a therapist who just goes through the motions of putting on a cream, taking it off, putting on a mask and taking it off, you can wind up wondering why you're paying for something you're just able to do at home with your own products.

You will not feel like this with a bespoke Ila facial. In fact, I almost do the treatment a disservice to call it just a facial, because it was so much more than that. Comprised mainly of meditative sweeping massage, this facial helps drain your lymphatic system and eliminate puffiness from the face.

Essence of sea lavender and sea lettuce improve your circulation bestowing me with a rosy glow which belied the fact I'd only been away from London for 36 hours. Although not normally a fan of the hippy-dippy therapy speak, I truly felt this 90-minute long facial was 'transformative' not only to my face (friends remarked that I looked 'lifted' and 'healthy' for days afterwards), but to my mind as well.



One treatment involves stripping off and being sprayed with warm sea water all over your body

Lastly I tried what I have simply named 'The Jets'. It's hard to explain how much I loved The Jets, but it's not for the faint hearted. Want an instant slimming treatment, one that rids your body of its wobbly bits and improves the look and feel of your skin? Book in for the Ila Thalasso Jet Shower and Deep Tissue Massage.

Here's what happens. You strip off and don a pair of paper pants. You enter a large tiled chamber with handles at one end of the room where you stand. Then, a lovely lady comes in, picks up what looks to be a fireman's hose attached to a contraption which heats seawater to just a bit warmer than your body, then she fires it at you, working up your legs from your feet. Doing your tummy, your back, chest and arms. You turn around and face the wall so she can do your back and the backs of your legs and buttocks.



Pampering treatments: The spa offers healing massages using exotic oils made from Cypriot roses

The pressure is quite high although not uncomfortably so, and in under a minute the area being 'jetted' goes red where the circulation is rushing around. This is the aim of the treatment and so, when that happens, the therapist moves on to the next area.

After you're all red and completely drenched – soggy paper pants and all – you are taken to another room to shower, dry off and lay on the massage table to be slathered in super soft jasmine and tuberose moisturiser which is then massaged in to your skin.

So did Anassa live up to the most finicky spa reviewer in the world? Dear readers, it did. I really cannot recommend the Ila treatments at Anassa highly enough. Beg borrow or steal to get yourself there, there's not a broom cupboard in sight.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3091397/More-broom-cupboard-couple-candles-Anassa-Spa-Cyprus-ticks-boxes-seasoned-spa-junky.html>